



Idea,
Form,
Resonance

30 Years of Emerging Voices

The
Architectural
League
of New York

1994-1998

It was time to get clean. It was time to get dirty. On the side of cleanliness, Enrique Norton (EV94), Neil Denari (EV95), Gisue Hariri and Mojgan Hariri (EV95), Jesse Reiser and Nanako Umemoto (EV96), Karen Fairbanks and Scott Marble (EV98), Michael Maltzan (EV98), and others—some among them deploying the then-brand-new computational tools that enabled iterative versioning of complex folds and compound curves—unrolled smooth and swoopy terrains of synthetic surfaces and pliant continuities. On the side of dirt, Sheila Kennedy and Frano Violich (EV94), Brigitte Shim and Howard Sutcliffe (EV95), Kathryn Dean and Charles Wolf (EV97), Michael Manfredi and Marion Weiss (EV97), and others combined their interests in craft-driven material practices, in trees and rocks, in hyperarticulate tectonics, and in historical industrial and vernacular typologies—pounding together landscapes of floating planes, revealed edges, and the blackest, steeliest, beamiest black-steel beams, ever.

Time brings convergences. The ever-more-thoughtful Weiss and Manfredi have heroically pushed their work to its seemingly opposed extremes, abandoning merely naturalistic craftiness for landscapes of actual nature, sheathed in and balanced by structures of sleek technology. Marble and Fairbanks—alongside peers like Brad Cloepfil (EV96) and Tom Buresh and Danelle Guthrie (EV97)—have meticulously applied computational thinking to the repetitions and inspirations of fabrication (digital and material culture compressed inside a thousand laminations of quivering plywood). And that recondite streak of Stirlingesque Palladianism in those mid-1990s high-tech steel structures? That brooding Pichleresque technoclassicism in those moody cast-concrete beach houses and memorials? That faint residue of Krier? Doesn't it feel like their ecstatic revival is just a heartbeat away, at the fingertips of one's keenest student?

From across a wide watershed of technology and terror, what's true of all recent pasts is particularly true of our own: we see an encounter between real and seeming, between virtually clean and actually dirty. Our recent past is full of unsettling possibilities, where the accelerated certainties compelled by contemporary

social media have not yet been directed back to meet the received truths and willfully canonical narratives of consensus history. Somewhere between the computationally linked advent of the World Wide Web and the faux apocalypse of Y2K, between yesterday's Cold War and tomorrow's Drone War, the mid-1990s astonish in both their old newness and new oldness.

James Cutler (EV94), who has long practiced in a venerable Pacific Northwest vernacular modernism, took the last studio taught by Louis Kahn at the University of Pennsylvania in 1974. I think of the luminous shadow of Kahn—that most hokey and yet most irrefutable of architects—casting itself past the follies and furies of postmodernism and deconstructivism, past all wan contingencies of progress, personal and technological, into tomorrow. I think of the vital work of the late Mojdeh Baratloo, a passionate planner and powerful teacher who, along with her design partner, Clifton Balch, was an Emerging Voice in 1996. I think of their *Angst: Cartography*, which superimposed choreography onto geography, diagramming *Invisible Cities* onto old Sanborn maps of an imperial New York and an unremediated Gowanus Canal, “running at night,” as that project quoted Italo Calvino, “through an unknown city.” I think of Baratloo layering all that cleanliness onto itself until it became dirty enough to see.

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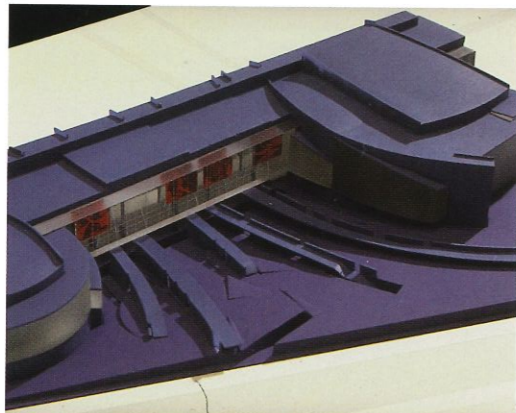
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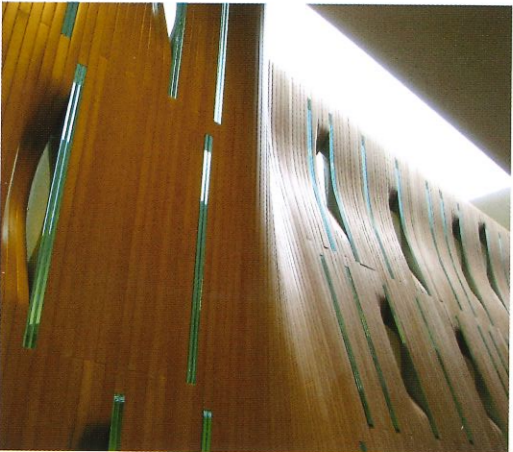
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Karen Fairbanks, Scott Marble

Marble Fairbanks, New York City (est. 1990)

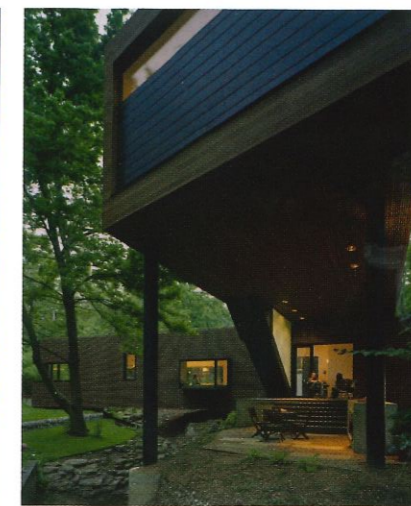
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- 01 Chelsea Loft, New York, NY, 1994. Photo Peter Paige
- 02 Glen Oaks Branch Library, Queens, NY, 2013. Photo Eduard Hueber/Arch Photo
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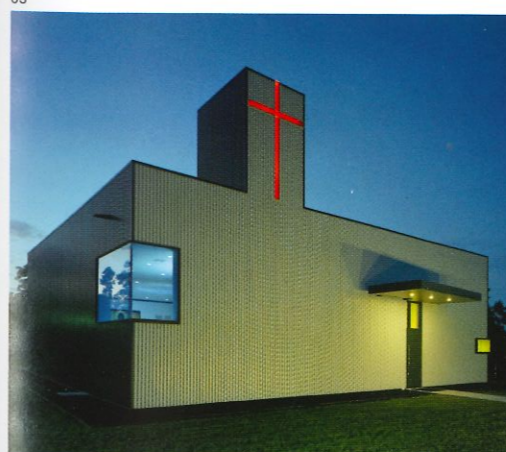
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